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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DA RELEASES DETAILS OF CEMETERY SHOOTING DEATH; FINDS SHOOTING WAS JUSTIFIED UNDER THE LAW

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (April 7, 2023) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele today shared the results of the investigation related to the March 18, 2023, fatal shooting in a Horsham cemetery that left one man dead and another man suffering from serious injuries. Based on the results of the investigation, the District Attorney has concluded that Daniel Hawkins, 29, of Philadelphia, was shot and killed in self-defense.

The shooting occurred at approximately 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 18, 2023. Horsham Police were dispatched to Whitemarsh Memorial Park, located at 1169 Limekiln Pike, after receiving multiple 911 calls reporting shots fired. Police arrived to find Hawkins deceased in a grassy area inside the cemetery, with a Glock 27, .40 caliber handgun found in close proximity to his body. A second shooting victim, 33-year-old Arian Davis of Philadelphia, had been transported to Abington Hospital by private vehicle suffering from gunshot wounds to his jaw, hand and leg. More than 30 fired cartridge casings were recovered at the scene.

A joint investigation into the deadly shooting was launched by Horsham Township Police and Montgomery County Detectives. The investigation found that the Glock firearm recovered next to Hawkins' body had an extended magazine and had been altered to add a device, known as a "switch," that converted the handgun into a fully automatic weapon. Hawkins was prohibited from possessing a firearm due to prior felony convictions. Hawkins' body was found near a Jeep Grand Cherokee bearing a fraudulent temporary license plate, which Hawkins had driven alone to the cemetery, according to several witnesses. Detectives found that the vehicle had recently been reported stolen to Philadelphia Police.

The investigation found that Davis and others had come to the cemetery to celebrate the birthday of a deceased friend, who had been killed in Norristown in 2013. As Davis and a friend were seated in the car they arrived in, Hawkins approached and began shooting into the vehicle at Davis, whom he knew, with his illegally altered firearm firing in fully automatic mode. In response, Davis returned gunfire with his firearm, striking and killing Hawkins. Davis possessed a legally purchased firearm and had a valid conceal carry permit.

"There is no doubt about who shot and killed Hawkins, so the legal issue to be analyzed is whether this was a justifiable killing. To be justified in his shooting of

Hawkins, the shooter had to be in reasonable fear of death or serious bodily injury. Evidence shows that Hawkins approached Davis' vehicle and began firing multiple rounds at him using a firearm that was illegally altered to fire rapidly. Bullets struck Davis in multiple parts of his body before he fired back, striking Hawkins and killing him," said Steele. "Davis was under attack and in danger of being killed when he fired his legally owned weapon to end the threat. For these reasons, I conclude that this was a justifiable shooting, and therefore, no criminal charges are warranted."

Approved for release:
Kevin R. Steele